International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education
IASCE

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Dear Colleagues,

IASCE is pleased to bring you the final member newsletter of 2017.

I'll begin by highlighting an announcement included in this issue. IASCE is accepting nominations for positions on the IASCE board. We invite you to consider this opportunity to contribute to the field and to the IASCE. The deadline for self-nominations is 15 April 2018. Information about the IASCE board and the roles and responsibilities of board members may be found at www.iasce.net. Also, feel free to contact Lynda Baloche at lynda@iasce.net or Celeste Brody at celeste@iasce.net to learn more.

As is typical, this issue includes book reviews, a *Members' Column*, and abstracts of recently published articles related to cooperative learning and the use of cooperation in a variety of contexts and contents. This issue of the Members' Column focuses on Latin America—specifically El Salvador and Mexico—and we are grateful to Christine and Clotilde for sharing their passions and perspectives. I want to thank Yael Sharan for her persistence in bringing the Members' Column to us and invite you, our members, to contact Yael at yael@iasce.net with ideas for future columns. I have enjoyed reading George Jacobs' diverse contributions to this issue of the newsletter and would like to thank George for contributing several provocative pieces this year. I think many of us are used to considering how animals cooperate (for instance, see the first reference in this issue's *Serendipity* column), but considering how trees cooperate may be a field that is just taking root. George's review of *Popular* is (unfortunately) timely, as news reports continue to overflow with individuals and governments trying to flex their power and status and there just doesn't seem to be much likeability. The abstracts in this issue are, as is often the case, fascinating in their breadth—of content and geographic region and of the age ranges and disciplines in which cooperative learning is being examined. Issues of cultural relevance, implementation and sustainability, and teacher professional development, continue to engage researchers.

As 2017 comes to a close, and we are in the midst of a time of celebration and reflection, I would like to thank all those who enrich the field by continuing to research fundamental concepts and applications of cooperative learning. I would like to thank all those who work in classrooms, where they facilitate learning with students of all ages and teach them the skills and benefits of cooperative work. These are lessons that can last a lifetime and have impact far beyond the classroom. I would like to thank the IASCE Board for their continued commitment, with special thanks to Jill Clark, our Newsletter Editor.

Our goal is always to support the mission of IASCE and to support our members. With that in mind, we thank you—our members and readers. We are grateful for your commitment to the field and for your support of IASCE. We encourage you to contact us to share your own projects, to discuss partnership possibilities, and to share ideas about how IASCE might grow and expand its support for the study of cooperation in education.

Thank you for working to expand the use of cooperation in learning and living.

Cooperatively yours,

Writing for This Newsletter

There are so many things happening world-wide related to cooperative learning! Help others find out about them by writing articles or short news items for inclusion in this newsletter, and by submitting abstracts of published work for inclusion in the *From the Journals* section of the newsletter. Short pieces (1000 words or less) are preferred.

The newsletter appears three times a year. Please email submissions or questions about them to the editor of the IASCE Newsletter, Jill Clark at jilliandc@gmail.com . Put "IASCE Newsletter" on the subject line of the email, please.

Thank you for your submissions.

Topics for the Members' Column

Potential topics for The Members' Column in upcoming newsletters include:

- ☆ collaborating via IT and CSCL (computer supported CL)
- ☆ cooperation with people outside of school
- ☆ CL in art, music, dance, and drama.
- ☆ CL with students with special needs
- ☆ CL in mathematics
- ☆ CL and literacy
- ☆ CL in a specific country

If you would like to contribute, or if you would like to suggest a topic, please contact Board Member Yael Sharan at yael@iasce.net

Database of Abstracts

Members may request a database of abstracts in the field of cooperative learning. Currently, this database includes almost 20 years of abstracts published in the IASCE Newsletter. Please send your request to Board Member Wendy Jolliffe at wendy@iasce.net

Popular: The power of likability in a status-obsessed world

Mitch Prinsteen

Reviewed by George Jacobs

The key idea of this book is that people like to be popular, and although we can be popular in one of two ways – via status or via likability - likability offers the surer, more beneficial, more long term path to popularity. Unfortunately, "Society has become fixated on status and all of its trappings—fame, power, wealth, and celebrity—even though research suggests that this is exactly what we should be avoiding if we want to foster a culture of kindness and contentment" (p. 8). This book might have relevance for cooperative learning (CL), because of insights into how groups of students function.

While likability might seem the path to popularity most congenial to effective group functioning, the book focuses more attention on the ills of status seeking and much less on how to promote likeability. Perhaps the author's (Mitchell Prinstein, a Psychology professor at University of North Carolina, USA) next book will rectify this. Prinstein laments that schools spend a great deal of time helping students learn language and mathematics, at the same time that: "the ability to establish great relationships with others seems to be every bit as important to success if not more, yet it's not taught in a formal way" (p. 25).

The *Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary* defines popular as "liked, enjoyed, or supported by many people." Prinstein cites research which found that popularity is one of the best predictors of whether people flourish in their lives: "In fact, the only factor comparable to unpopularity as a health hazard is smoking!" (p. 103). Indeed, it was not surprising to see that the book's back cover contains an endorsement from Martin Seligman, best known for his work in Positive Psychology, as Positive Psychology studies ways that people can lead healthy, purposeful lives built on connections with others.

The desire to be popular has physiological as well as psychological and sociological roots. The brains of humans, as well as those of other mammals, contain the ventral striatum which, at the start of adolescence, is "especially activated when we experience rewards that are social in nature" (p. 58). This activation plays a part in children's shift away from parents and toward peers, and may explain some of the seemingly irrational actions people take in pursuit of popularity. Prinstein maintains that, "in adolescence, our self-concept is not merely informed by how our peers treat us but is fully dictated by such experiences" (p. 65). Furthermore, the self-concepts formed in adolescence can stay with us throughout our lives.

Attaining and maintaining popularity via status rather than likability leads to several problems. The first is that we may take actions that we know are neither wise nor kind, such as bullying. Second, we may be willing to give too much credibility to high status people, e.g., copying people's action simply because they are celebrities at local level or beyond. Third, status seeking can lead to selfishness: "Fame is in. Power, influence, and prestige are hot. Character, kindness, and community? Not so much" (p. 75). Fourth, people falsely believe that status leads to happiness. Instead, status and any gains that flow from it too often are fleeting. Prinsteen cites a study (Allen, Schad, Ouderkerk, & Chango, 2014) that investigated the status levels of 13-year-olds and then revisited those same people ten years later and found that those with high status ten years earlier appeared to be encountering more difficulties than were their previously lower status peers.

What makes people likeable seems to be fairly universal, and those who are likable can be either introverted or extraverted. Likable people seem to have what Gardner (1993) would call Interpersonal Intelligence, being able to understand others and to apply social skills, such as asking questions to learn about others, showing interest in others, taking turns, seeking consensus, and displaying patience. Furthermore, people view as likeable those who they see as fair, trustworthy, and sharing. Prinstein takes likeability even further: "likeable people live in a different world from the one inhabited by their unlikable peers. It is a world of their own making, and it produces a chain reaction of experience that moulds their lives in dramatic ways" (p. 119). The book offers many case studies, including sad and happy ones from the author's own life, to illustrate the concepts discussed in the book.

In conclusion, cooperative learning has much to contribute to enhancing people's likeability and, thus, their long term popularity. For instance, while a 2010 study by Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton (cited on p. 113) reported that, "In just the past twenty years, the number of people reporting that they feel they have no close confidant has tripled," CL offers a place to nurture such friendships. Toward this end, Johnson & Johnson (1994) advocate that standard classroom CL groups which last for an activity or perhaps as long as a term be augmented by base groups, which are longer term, stable groups who provide each other with academic and emotional support.

More fundamentally, CL offers students a laboratory where, with teachers' guidance, they can develop the various social skills and attitudes that are so crucial to likability. Furthermore, by promoting positive interdependence (the view that our outcomes are positively linked to those of others), CL encourages an environment that catalyzes the chain reactions of experiences that Prinstein writes about, the kinds of experiences where the positive popularity of likability can blossom. Along with positive interdependence, the companion CL principle of individual accountability sets the stage for students to contribute to making their groups, their classrooms, their schools, and beyond places where, rather than competing for status, students can cooperate toward everyone being liked and valued.

References

Allen, J. P., Schad, M. M., Ouderkerk, B., & Chango, J. (2014). What ever happened to the "cool" kids? Long-term sequelae of early adolescent pseudomature behaviour. *Child Development, 85*(5), 1866-1880. doi: 10.1111/cdev.12250

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Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T. B., & Layton, J. B. (2010). Social relationships and mortality risk: A meta-analytic review. *PLoS Medicine, 7(*7), e1000316.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1994). *The new cooperative learning.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Prinsteen, M. (2017). *Popular: The power of likability in a status-obsessed world.* New York, NY: Penguin.

IASCE MEMBERS' COLUMN

Coordinator: Yael Sharan

In this issue, the seventh in the series, we introduce the work of two members, each from different parts of the world: Christine Schmalenbach, from Germany, and Coty Lomeli Agruel, from Mexico. They "meet" through their respective work with teachers in Latin America. Both Christine and Coty introduced CL to teachers, yet neither in the same way nor in the same context.

Christine: For my PhD dissertation I conducted an ethnography study at a school in a high-risk neighbourhood in El Salvador. My aim was to explore how aspects of the local context and culture influence the use of cooperative methods in school and how they can be taken into account to implement CL successfully. I interviewed teachers, students, parents and co-workers of a local NGO and observed classes. After several months, I introduced some cooperative methods, in collaboration with teachers, observed students' reactions to CL, and asked teachers and students for feedback.

First I observed the local forms of interaction in the neighbourhood and the school, and found that mutual help and support were relevant to everyday interactions, especially in the face of need, ranging from lending a pencil to a classmate to giving financial support to a neighbour. Participants gave different reasons for helping someone: relationships, an inner impulse to help, helping as an aspect of their identity, awareness of a shared vulnerability and need for help, belief in retribution by God, or fate if help is given or withheld. They mentioned fewer examples of working together for a shared goal and spoke about a lack of unity in this context. However, joint work did take place in some instances, when there was an attractive and transparent goal, a critical situation that had to be dealt with, and/ or competent and trustworthy leadership.

All of these aspects were related to how teachers and co-workers of the NGO understood the term "solidarity": identification with each other, unity, mutual goals, tolerance, taking care of one another, and helping each other and those in need. Solidarity is one of the values that the official school curriculum aims to foster. Participants from all groups often spoke of their desire to see more of it in their community. However, instances of competition, aggression, and exclusion were also observed, inside and outside of the school. These could be seen as an expression of the frustration and shame of living in a socially marginalized neighbourhood (which can be reinforced by school when the local way of life is ignored or put down). At the same time, they are also an expression of a local culture permeated by gang values and a survival strategy – showing one's strength in the face of danger, and helping each other to develop this strength.

Students expressed their wish for more solidarity at school. The teachers and I worked together using both structured CL methods such as Jigsaw and "Partner Interview," and less structured group tasks, such as building a model together or developing a comic strip. We interspersed team building activities (e.g. inventing a country) and exercises that fostered communication (e.g. explaining a picture with geometrical structures to a partner who has to draw it). Students' feedback about group processes and methods showed they felt more responsibility for their groups' and their own learning processes and pride in the results and in their capability of dealing with challenges in interaction. The teachers perceived new strengths in their students. However, the interaction among students, encouraged through CL, also brought to the surface the conflicting patterns of behaviour, as exclusionary processes and aggression did come up in the groups. These had to be dealt with sensitively, as they were sometimes related to survival strategies in the school context. CL can be a means of helping students to reflect which form of behaviour is adequate and facilitates solidarity and joint success at school, while showing respect for the challenges students deal with in their everyday lives. However, it requires teachers' attentiveness and reflexivity – both for the surroundings and for classroom processes.

The use of CL in the two classrooms did not fundamentally change traditional forms of interaction; it simply gave children the chance to experience more solidarity and to learn strategies that could resolve some of the conflicts in their interaction. Local context and culture has to be taken into account when implementing CL – that's why it is important that teachers know them and reflect on them when choosing CL activities.

Coty: Although cooperative learning (CL) is highly valued in Latin America, it is seldom applied in our school system. Christine's ethnography study is a clear example of the type of research much needed so we can have a better understanding of CL in our context.

As Christine points out, "solidarity" is a well-known value in Latin American culture. The recent major earthquake in México was an example of massive solidarity. Buildings collapsed and within minutes the people in the streets, from a variety of backgrounds, without knowing one another, worked together to free people caught under the debris. Seniors and those less strong took part by providing water and food to the human chain working with the wreckage. That happened for over a week, day and night. Even though solidarity is part of our identity it coexists with opposing values. Some of these conflicting values stem from corruption, present in institutions and social relations. Corruption is a form of competition; it drives people to pursue their personal advantage by taking and giving favors or goods against the law or when they are not entitled to the benefit.

Latin America has many cultures; within each country there are diverse cultures and the classroom is multicultural. In one classroom there may be students from various ethnic groups, immigrants from other countries, or from different states of the same country. The use of CL in classrooms needs to be part of everyday teaching strategies to have lasting effects on teachers' and students' social interaction and values.

From our work in México in teacher training for CL in higher education, we have witnessed teachers becoming more reflective and motivated to use CL when training is on-site and provides teachers with immediate scaffolding. In contrast, the gains of teacher education, when conducted in a traditional manner, fade quickly. Here, the saying "more is not better" can apply. In the long term, training a random group of teachers does not seem to be as effective as situated training of one or two teachers at the same time, in their own teaching context.

Back in 2009 we started week-long teacher training for CL methods, with groups of 25. From teachers´ feedback we learned that this was not an effective training approach; they reported feeling overloaded with the information and not very motivated to try CL in their classrooms. Thus, a different approach was planned: a situated experience that earned comments of high satisfaction from teachers.

Based on teachers' reports, our most effective experience so far in CL training in higher education is a combination of online and situated learning activities. The online part is not about CL; it only helps identify teachers who are interested in trying CL in their classroom later on. They work in teams but do not use any specific CL method nor even discuss CL.

In the online part, teachers, in teams, discuss the question: What can I do to encourage my students to learn together and love what they do? The activity is designed to elicit their knowledge, concerns and interests, stimulate interaction among them, encourage them to express their ideas, and formulate proposals for carrying out their ideas. In the closing session, the instructor connects their proposals with CL theory and methods and invites them to sign up for partnerships for the implementation of their proposals.

The situated part is carried out with the teachers who signed up to learn how to use CL to implement their proposals. Partnerships are created voluntarily and are maintained by a tutor through telephone conversations, video chat, emails and face to face meetings. Teachers learn, with the tutor's guidance, how to implement and refine CL activities, based on the specific needs of their classrooms.

We are in the early stages of incorporating CL in teachers´ practice. There is a high need for systematic research to show how CL improves teachers´ and students´ social interaction and values in higher education in Latin America. The theoretical underpinning and the international research on the benefits of CL encourage us to implement CL in schools in Latin America.

Christine Schmalenbach is a lecturer at the Department for Social and Emotional Development at the Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences of the TU Dortmund University in Germany, where she is involved in pre-service teacher training. She wrote her PhD thesis on the use and potential of CL in high-risk neighbourhoods in El Salvador, in relation to local context and culture.

Schmalenbach, C. (2017). *Learning cooperatively under challenging circumstances. A mixed methods study on cooperation among students in high-risk contexts in El Salvador*. Manuscript submitted for publication. (christine.schmalenbach@tu-dortmund.de).

Clotilde Lomeli Agruel has been a Research Professor for over 25 years at the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California in México. (cotylomely@hotmail.com).

Nominations Sought for Directors of the International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (IASCE)

The IASCE has a proud history of almost 40 years. It is an international organization that provides various forums for educators, at all levels and in difference venues, who research and practice any of the many forms of collaborative and cooperative processes. One of the principal roles of the IASCE is to link organizations and individuals interested in the research and practice of cooperative learning and related approaches.

Managed by a volunteer Board of Directors, the organization has, for the past several years, channeled its communication and networking efforts through four main avenues: a website, a three-times-a-year newsletter which is available to members and non-members alike, guest-edited topical issues of established journals, and conferences.

Directors normally serve four-year, elected terms. At this time, we are announcing plans to hold an election for new and continuing Directors.

Directors must be IASCE members and are expected to contribute to the work of the Association. To learn more about these expectations, please email Celine Buchs, current Board Secretary, at celine@iasce.net. She will reply with the document *IASCE Board of Directors Purpose, Responsibilities, and Roles.* This document is also available at http://www.iasce.net/home/get-to-know-the-board where you can also read brief bios of each current board member.

Potential Directors self nominate. To nominate yourself, please send the following, via attached file to Celine at celine@iasce.net by **15 April 2018**. We anticipate that the election process will be completed by 15 June 2018.

- ☆ Name
- ☆ Contact information
- ☆ Institutional affiliations, both current and other relevant ones
- ☆ Experience working in areas of education relevant to IASCE*
- ☆ Reasons why you would be an asset to the IASCE Board*

*please limit items 4 and 5 to approximately 1000 words total

IASCE does exciting work. We welcome your participation. Thank you.

Tree Cooperation

George M Jacobs
James Cook University Singapore
george.jacobs@gmail.com

Previously, the IASCE Newsletter ran a short article on cooperation among non-human animals (Jacobs, 2017). The article hoped to contribute to the debate about cooperation among humans by making the point that even so-called "lower" animals cooperate; thus, cooperation among humans should not be seen as unnatural or difficult. Now comes a book by a German forester (Wohlleben, 2015) suggesting that trees also cooperate with other trees, other plants and with animals and fungi.

Wohlleben recounts that when he began his forestry career, "I knew about as much about the hidden life of trees as a butcher knows about the emotional life of animals" (p. xiii). Then, he started to look at trees as more than a source of lumber, and, "Life as a forester became exciting once again. Every day in the forest was a day of discovery" (p. xiv).

Below lies some of what Wohlleben discovered about cooperation among trees and between trees and other organisms. However, it should be made clear that evidence of cooperation among trees, just as with evidence of cooperation among humans and other animals, is not meant to deny the existence of competition. Furthermore, as with animals and fungi, context greatly affects cooperation among trees.

Fungi are neither plants nor animals, and trees collaborate with them in a variety of ways, as fungi function as a kind of "forest internet" (p. 51). For example, by linking with fungi, trees can reach further out into the forest floor in search of water and other nutrients. Fungi also benefit trees by removing pollutants which would harm the trees. Together, trees and their fungi partners can live to be hundreds of years old.

Trees also cooperate with animals, including birds who eat insects, as well as insects who eat other insects. An example are great spotted woodpeckers who eat bark beetles which threaten the lives of spruce trees. In the event that the woodpeckers arrive too late to save the life of a particular tree, the neighbouring trees benefit from the reduction in the number of bark beetles.

Birth rates among trees and animals are mutually impacted, as trees rely on animals to disseminate the trees' seeds, and animals rely on trees for food. Wohlleben, who has a tendency to anthropomorphize trees and other nonhumans, maintains that particular types of trees, such as conifers, agree together on when they will bloom, and this greatly impacts the populations of boars and deer who eat the resulting seeds.

Wohlleben begins a book chapter titled "United We Stand, Divided We Fall" with the assertion that, "Trees are very social beings, and they help each other out" (p. 49). Although each tree seems to be standing alone, they connect to one another in a number of ways, such as via their root systems, sometimes extended by cooperating fungi. Indeed, even tree stumps can be kept alive with the assistance of their neighbours who provide water and nutrients.

Why are trees social beings? To use the language of cooperative learning, trees are positively interdependent with one another.

A tree is not a forest. On its own, a tree cannot establish a consistent local climate. … But together, many trees create an ecosystem that moderates extremes of heat and cold, stores a great deal of water, and generates a great deal of humidity. If every tree were looking out only for itself, then quite a few of them would never reach old age. Regular fatalities would result in many large gaps in the tree canopy, which would make it easier for storms to get inside the forest and uproot more trees. … Every tree would suffer. (p. 4)

For example, scientists have noted that when giraffes begin to eat the leaves of acacia trees, the immediately affected trees will release a gas which repels the giraffes. Furthermore, nearby trees, even those whose leaves are not yet being eaten, seem to have become aware of the smell, as they too begin to give off a similar gas. Additionally, trees can vary their scent depending on the task they undertake.

Trees communicate not only via the air, but also through the roots using chemicals and electrical impulses, and perhaps even sounds. This communication can be not only with other trees but also with other plants, including shrubs and grasses. Interestingly, the communication among plants can be disrupted by human intervention. For example, Wohllenben claims that modern agriculture's dependence on pesticides has arisen because farming practices have played havoc with plants' ability to defend themselves from insects by such means as communication.

In conclusion, just as learning more about trees re-energised Wohllenben's life as a forester, so too can learning more about our students re-energise our lives as teachers. This article was written with the hope of focusing readers' attention on the area of cooperation. Just as Wohllenben states that scientists have so much more to learn about tree cooperation, we have so much more to learn to understand how cooperation works among students and other humans and what can be done to enhance it.

References

Jacobs, G. M. (2017). Cooperation among animals. *IASCE Newsletter, 36*(2), 5-7. Retrieved from http://www.iasce.net/home/newsletters

Wohlleben, P. (2015). *The hidden life of trees: What they feel, how they communicate.* Vancouver, Canada: David Suzuki Institute.

Serendipity

Lynda Baloche

I am fortunate that friends often send me interesting articles and news items related to cooperation. Here are three that might be of interest.

"Game Theory Calls Cooperation into Question"

https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/game-theory-calls-cooperation-into-question1/

Based on recent mathematical modeling, this article reexamines the classic Prisoner's Dilemma game-theory scenario. Includes an interesting discussion and examples of how, in nature, it might be in an animal's own self-interest to act in ways that suggest generosity.

"Winning a Competition Predicts Dishonest Behavior"

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/02/160203134850.htm

http://www.pnas.org/content/113/7/1754

This research article examines the stark differences between non-comparative success and "winning" over others. Researchers, conducting a series of experiments, found that, after engaging in competitive activities, "winners" felt a sense of entitlement and were more likely to behave unethically or "cheat," in subsequent unrelated tasks, than were those who did not "win."

When I read this article, I thought about classrooms I have visited where, even though the teacher and students were skilled at the use of cooperative learning, I saw and heard subtle competitive messages. There messages were sometimes intergroup competition, sometimes a chart on the wall indicating how many books each student had read, sometimes a cue a teacher gave a student that suggested s/he was more favored than others.

"Wise Deliberation Sustains Cooperation"

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/03/170307112906.htm

https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-017-0061

This research suggests that when people are given time to think about cooperating on a task, this can be helpful, but only if they are big-picture thinkers—thinkers who are able to focus on interdependent goals, recognize the limits of their own knowledge, and examine other perspectives—rather than think primarily about their own immediate self-interests.

When I thought about this article, I thought about the power teachers have in *how* they introduce the cooperative aspect of a task and how they focus students' reflection on learning and interaction. Our own language can help students learn to be big-picture thinkers rather than focused on an immediate response and getting a task "done."

From the Journals

Contributors: Jill Clark, George Jacobs, Lalita Agashe and Yael Sharan

Duran, D., Corcelles, M., & Flores, M. (2017). Enhancing expectations of cooperative learning use through initial teacher training. *International Journal of Educational Psychology*, *6*(3), 278-300. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.17583/ijep.2017.2504.

Despite of its relevance and evidence support, Cooperative Learning (CL) is a challenge for all the educational systems because of the difficulties for its implementation. This study has the objective to identify the effect of Primary Education initial teacher training in the prediction of future CL use. Two groups, of 44 and 45 students, were conceptually trained, with the latter also having the opportunity to experience CL in the university classroom. Opting for a mixed methods research, this study tries to identify changes in a pre- and post-test Cooperative Learning Implementation Questionnaire and to explain possible changes through 4 focus groups. Quantitative results show differences in expectations of CL success and index of CL use for the group who had the CL experience. Qualitative data revealed that improvements can be explained by the increase in students' awareness of the learning opportunities that CL offered them, giving and receiving scaffold help, preparing activities and enhancing motivation.

Dopico, E., & Pevida, D. (2017). PBL teaching method through Cooperative Learning. *Global Journal of Educational Studies, 3*(1), 53-60. doi: https://doi.org/10.5296/gjes.v3i1.10954

The challenges proposed by the knowledge society requires a change of mentality and routines of our students. Consequently, a shift is also needed in the role played by teachers in their education. 34 secondary school teachers from three Spanish high schools, from Ceuta, Madrid and Asturias, working as part of a network, began to introduce project-based learning (PBL) and cooperative learning to facilitate this change. We analyze the correlations between the beliefs and the attitudes of teachers when they were initiating a methodological transition in their patterns of teaching. At the same time, we compare the competencies and strategies related with PBL that 372 secondary school students from these high schools consider being personally important with those who they believe necessary to improve their learning or to be successful with academic requirements.

Fernandez-Rio, J., Cecchini, J. A., Méndez-Gimenez, A., Mendez-Alonso, D., & Prieto, J. A. (2017). Self-regulation, Cooperative Learning, and academic self-efficacy: Interactions to prevent school failure. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *8*, 22. http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00022

Learning to learn and learning to cooperate are two important goals for individuals. Moreover, self regulation has been identified as fundamental to prevent school failure. The goal of the present study was to assess the interactions between self-regulated learning, cooperative learning and academic self-efficacy in secondary education students experiencing cooperative learning as the main pedagogical approach for at least one school year. 2.513 secondary education students (1.308 males, 1.205 females), 12–17 years old (M = 13.85, SD = 1.29), enrolled in 17 different schools belonging to the National Network of Schools on Cooperative Learning in Spain agreed to participate. They all had experienced this pedagogical approach a minimum of one school year. Participants were asked to complete the cooperative learning questionnaire, the strategies to control the study questionnaire and the global academic self-efficacy questionnaire. Participants were grouped based on their perceptions on cooperative learning and self-regulated learning in their classes. A combination of hierarchical and κ-means cluster analyses was used. Results revealed a four-cluster solution: cluster one included students with low levels of cooperative learning, self-regulated learning and academic self-efficacy, cluster two included students with high levels of cooperative learning, self-regulated learning and academic self-efficacy, cluster three included students with high levels of cooperative learning, low levels of self-regulated learning and intermediate -low levels of academic self-efficacy, and, finally, cluster four included students with high levels of self-regulated learning, low levels of cooperative learning, and intermediate-high levels of academic self-efficacy. Self-regulated learning was found more influential than cooperative learning on students' academic self-efficacy. In cooperative learning contexts students interact through different types of regulations: self, co, and shared.

Educators should be aware of these interactions, symmetrical or asymmetrical, because they determine the quality and quantity of the students' participation and achievements, and they are key elements to prevent school failure.

Gennari, R., Melonio, A., & Torello, S. (2017). Gamified probes for cooperative learning: A case study. *Multimedia Tools and Applications*, *76*(4), 4925-4949.

This paper advances the idea of tangible gamified probes for cooperative learning processes, which require synchronous in-presence and in-situ interactions. The paper focuses on gamified probes for promoting a sense of progression and control, as well as social relations in a cooperative learning process in classroom. It reports a case study in a primary school. The study employed gamified probes as early-design solutions: each probe had limited ad-hoc functionalities, tested in the field, and was flexible enough to enable different usages so as to inspire designers. Probes were also endowed with embedded micro-electronic components for enhancing their interaction with children and human-to-human interaction, besides for storing relevant interaction data. After reporting the study results, the paper discusses them, and it concludes reflecting on the design of future gamified probes for enhancing cooperative learning in classroom

Gharaman, V., & Tamimy, M. (2017). The role of culture in cooperative learning. *International Journal of Language Studies 11*(2):89-120.

Cooperative Learning (CL) as one of the most fertile areas of research in education is reported to have a precarious status in terms of its classroom implementation. Culture as one of the factors responsible for the malfunctioning cooperative group work has recently been gaining more attention. However, these attentions were, by and large, interpretive and speculative, rather than empirical. This paper is an investigation into the relationships between culture and the social drivers of group work. For this purpose, perceptions of 241 and

200 Iranian learners of English as a Foreign language (EFL), arrived at through convenience sampling, respectively about their culture and experience of group work were solicited using two psychometrically valid and reliable questionnaires. The data were analyzed using forced entry multiple regression and the results not only suggest that significant complicated relations exist between culture and the social components of cooperative group work but also determine how the cultural factors affect these social components. This study also contributes to the literature on culturally responsive teaching in the sense that it highlights how inaccurate judgments on the appropriacy of group work were made by reducing culture to collectivism or individualism. In conclusion, it offers future research some guidelines and suggestions.

Goodyear, V. A. (2017). Sustained professional development on cooperative learning: Impact on six teachers' practices and students' learning. *Research Quarterly For Exercise and Sport*, *88*(1), 83-94. doi: 10.1080/02701367.2016.1263381

Purpose: It has been argued, extensively and internationally, that sustained school-based continuous professional development (CPD) has the potential to overcome some of the shortcomings of traditional one-off CPD programs. Yet, the evidence base on more effective or less effective forms of CPD is contradictory. The mechanisms by which sustained support should be offered are unclear, and the impacts on teachers' and students' learning are complex and difficult to track. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of a sustained school-based, tailored, and supported CPD program on teachers' practices and students' learning.

Method: Data are reported from 6 case studies of individual teachers engaged in a yearlong CPD program focused on cooperative learning. The CPD program involved participatory action research and frequent interaction/support from a boundary spanner (researcher/facilitator). Data were gathered from 29 video-recorded lessons, 108 interviews, and 35 field journal entries.

Results: (a) Individualized (external) support, (b) departmental (internal) support, and (c) sustained support impacted teachers' practices of cooperative learning. The teachers adapted their practices of cooperative learning in response to their students' learning needs. Teachers began to develop a level of pedagogical fluency,

and in doing so, teachers advanced students' learning.

Conclusions: Because this study demonstrates impact, it contributes to international literature on effective CPD. The key contribution is the detailed evidence about how and why CPD supported 6 individual teachers to learn—differently—and the complexity of the learning support required to engage in ongoing curriculum development to positively impact student learning.

Hennebry, M. L., & Fordyce, K. (2017). Cooperative learning on an international masters. *Higher Education Research and Development,* pp. 1-15. doi: 10.1080/07294360.2017.1359150

Postgraduate taught provision in Anglophone higher education contexts is becoming increasingly populated by cohorts of students from a wide range of linguistic, cultural and educational backgrounds. However, the voices of these students on their learning experiences remain largely unheard. Little previous research exists on the experiences of higher degree students as they participate in group work in multi-cultural settings. This study investigates the perspectives of students from a variety of educational backgrounds on their experiences of cooperative learning in multi-national groups on a Master's programme at a UK university. Seven focus groups were conducted with students from a range of countries including Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC) and non-CHC backgrounds. Students perceived group work as often lacking adequate structure, leading to feelings of confusion and insecurity. While it was apparent that a complex interplay of cultural, cognitive, and linguistic factors impacted on the functioning of collaborative learning, the data highlighted the need to provide students with more structure and guidance for cooperative learning environments and the importance of creating intercultural learning opportunities for students to better understand the impact of cultural backgrounds on approaches to cooperative learning in multi-national situations.

Huang, T. C., & Huang, Y. M. (2017). Where are my cooperative learning companions: Designing an intelligent recommendation mechanism. *Multimedia Tools and Applications*, *76*(9), 11547-11565. doi: 10.1007/s11042-015-2678-2

Computer supported cooperative learning (CSCL) has attained considerable attention in recent years, but most CSCL systems do not consider ways of supporting learners in finding appropriate learning companions. In this study, we propose an intelligent learning companion recommendation mechanism (ILCRM) to deal with this problem. Specifically, ILCRM comprises three agents: (i) a candidate retrieval agent (CRA), (ii) a candidate evaluation agent (CEA), and (iii) a GA-based learning companion composition agent (GLCCA). The CRA and CEA are used to search a series of learning companion candidates based on two criteria (expertise level and participation level), and the GLCCA is employed to compose an appropriate cooperative group in which group members could be able to help learners solve the problems they face. The experimental results show that the proposed approach obtains a near optimal learning companion recommendation, has a significantly low computational cost, and satisfies the specified demands.

Inuwa, U., Abdullah, Z., & Hassan, H. (2017). Assessing the effect of cooperative learning on financial accounting achievement among secondary school students. *International Journal of Instruction, 10*(3), 31-46.

This study examined the effect of cooperative learning approach on financial accounting achievement among secondary school students in Gombe state, Nigeria. A pre-test-post-test-control group design was adopted. 120 students participated in the study were selected randomly from six schools. The students were divided into two equal groups, namely: experimental (i.e., cooperative learning approach) and control group (i.e., conventional approach), both at random. A Financial Accounting Achievement Test (FAAT) was used as an instrument for data collection. The study found that at the pre-test stage, there was no statistically significant difference between the achievement of cooperative learning students and conventional approach students, the results suggested that the students were initially equal in terms of their achievements. Nevertheless, at the post-test stage, the achievement of students who were exposed to the cooperative learning was found to be significantly better than the achievement of students who were exposed to the conventional approach. The findings further suggested that cooperative learning approach effectively enhanced the financial accounting achievement of the secondary

school students. It is, therefore, recommended that government should encourage both curriculum planners and secondary schools' teachers to adopt cooperative learning approach as an instructional approach for teaching financial accounting in secondary schools to improve students' achievement in the subject.

Jensvoll, M.H., & Lekang, T. (2017). Strengthening professionalism through cooperative learning. *Professional Development in Education,* pp. 1-10. doi: 10.1080/19415257.2017.1376223

This article focuses on the processes that come into play as part of a school development project and how these processes contribute to strengthening teacher professionalism. Through processes of consciousness raising and the development of learning cultures where tacit knowledge becomes explicit and shared, and new practices are tested out and discussed, teacher professionalism is developed further. The study shows that this kind of school development work gives the teachers ownership of the development process and strengthens their consciousness about their own teaching as well as develops the learning cultures at the school. Thus, this development becomes an important way in which to reinforce the teachers' professional knowledge, responsibility and autonomy.

Loes, C., & Pascarella, E. (2017). Collaborative learning and critical thinking: Testing the link. *The Journal of Higher Education 88*(5), 726-753. doi: 10.1080/00221546.2017.1291257

In this paper, we investigate whether exposure to collaborative learning activities during the first year of college influences the development of critical thinking skills. To explore this issue, we analyze longitudinal data from 1,455 freshmen at 19 institutions throughout the United States. With statistical controls in place for a host of potential confounders, including a parallel pre-test critical thinking measure, we find that exposure to collaborative learning activities is associated with gains in critical thinking at the end of the freshman year of college, but only for White students and those who were the least well-prepared academically for college. Lastly, the results of a three-way interaction suggest that exposure to collaborative learning among Whites who also have relatively low levels of tested precollege academic preparation is positively associated with gains in critical thinking skills.

Melnichuk, M.V., & Osipova, V.M. (2017). Cooperative Learning as a valuable approach to teaching translation. *XLinguae 10*(1):25-33. doi:10.18355/XL.2017.10.01.03

In the process of rapid exchange of information and cross-cultural communication, translation is playing an increasingly important role. It is regarded as a constructive skill-enhancing tool. The paper reports the results of the research work aimed to evaluate the use of the cooperative learning (CL) technique for teaching translation in authentic classroom situation at a non-linguistic institution of higher education. We have been able to explore the value of the translation methodology "Cooperative Work Procedure" proposed by Prof. Gerding-Salas C. (Gerding-Salas, 2000). Research on collaboration compared group performance to individual performance as well as identified interactions within heterogeneous groups. The current study proves that both students and educators may benefit from CL. The paper focuses on the advantages of this method. The research used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings show that CL technique is highly suitable for the use in the translation class. Learning process evolves dynamically; the discussion stimulates criticism involving a fuller range of translation solutions and improvements and may lead into related topics for debate and discovery.

Pearson, B., Moore, K., & Barrett, J. (2017).Cooperative learning to enhance horticulture skills and raise funds for professional development. *HortTechnology, 27*(4), 455-457. doi:10.21273/HORTTECH03345-17

Increased global trade coupled with diversified employment opportunities have generated demand for college graduates to possess enhanced interpersonal and foreign communication skills and a well-developed understanding of foreign culture. Horticultural employment opportunities also require students to possess a mastery of horticultural theory with an established record of direct, hands-on experience. Despite these needs, financial limitations of students and academic departments coupled with a lack of available opportunities may restrict students from developing these critical skills. Through development of cooperative learning programs, students

have an opportunity to master and refine their horticultural skills while simultaneously raising funds, which are allocated for professional development including an international learning program. This article provides a successful overview of a student-based cooperative learning program that enhances student learning opportunities.

Raviv, A., Cohen, S. & Aflalo, E. (2017). How should students learn in the school science laboratory? The benefits of Cooperative Learning. *Research in Science Education*, pp.1-15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-017-9618-2

Despite the inherent potential of cooperative learning, there has been very little research into its effectiveness in middle school laboratory classes. This study focuses on an empirical comparison between cooperative learning and individual learning in the school science laboratory, evaluating the quality of learning and the students' attitudes. The research included 67 seventh-grade students who undertook four laboratory experiments on the subject of "volume measuring skills." Each student engaged both in individual and cooperative learning in the laboratory, and the students wrote individual or group reports, accordingly. A total of 133 experiment reports were evaluated, 108 of which also underwent textual analysis. The findings show that the group reports were superior, both in terms of understanding the concept of "volume" and in terms of acquiring skills for measuring volume. The students' attitudes results were statistically significant and demonstrated that they preferred cooperative learning in the laboratory. These findings demonstrate that science teachers should be encouraged to implement cooperative learning in the laboratory. This will enable them to improve the quality and efficiency of laboratory learning while using a smaller number of experimental kits. Saving these expenditures, together with the possibility to teach a larger number of students simultaneously in the laboratory, will enable greater exposure to learning in the school science laboratory.

Reineke, P. R. (2017). Let's cooperate! Integrating Cooperative Learning into a lesson on ethics. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing, 48*(4), 154-156.

Cooperative learning is an effective teaching strategy that promotes active participation in learning and can be used in academic, clinical practice, and professional development settings. This article describes that strategy and provides an example of its use in a lesson about ethics.

Rumiantsev, T.W., Maas, A., & Admiraal, W. (2017). Collaborative learning in two vocal conservatoire courses. *Music Education Research 19*(4), 371-383. doi: 10.1080/14613808.2016.1249363

The apprenticeship tradition in conservatoire education assumes that teachers' expertise is the main source for the development of future music professionals. However, the professional practice of vocalists is nearly completely based on collaboration, such as with other vocalists, instrumentalists, accompanists, orchestras, conductors, or stage directors. In this study experiences of students, alumni and teachers of one conservatoire in The Netherlands with collaborative learning practices in two vocal conservatoire courses were examined using student questionnaires and teacher interviews. Despite the assumption that the collaborative environment of group lessons would represent the ideal situation for learning to collaborate, group lessons did not explicitly lead to the collaborative and professional skills needed for musical practice. The main explanation for this might be that evaluated group lessons in this study were not designed with a learning goal of collaborative learning and working. A purposeful design of lessons in which content and pedagogy are aimed at developing these skills would enhance a culture of collaboration including both students and teachers, and as such mirror professional practice.

Sheninger, E., & Murray, T. C. (2017, June 5). Rebooting industrial era seating. *Edutopia*. Retrieved from https://www.edutopia.org/blog/rebooting-industrial-era-seating-eric-sheninger-thomas-murray

This article suggests that most classrooms are designed along the lines of cemeteries, except for the teacher's desk and whiteboard at the front. The authors call this a sit-and-get, cells and bells design. They make suggestions for more chaotic, learner centered, collaborative, self-directed learning, explorative, makerspace designs.

Talib, T., & Cheung, Y. L. (2017). Collaborative writing in classroom instruction: A synthesis of recent research. *The English Teacher, 46*(2), 43-57.

This study aims to present how collaborative writing as a pedagogical practice has developed over the last decade. We conducted a synthesis of published research that has investigated collaborative writing from a variety of perspectives, in first and second languages, and in diverse contexts internationally including students in primary, secondary schools, and universities. Three general claims, supported by evidence, emerged from our analyses of 68 empirical studies published in refereed journals from 2006-2016: (1) technology has facilitated collaborative writing tasks; (2) most students are motivated by an improvement in their writing competencies in collaborative writing tasks; and (3) collaborative writing is effective in improving accuracy of student writing and critical thinking. Pedagogical implications will be briefly discussed.

Tan, W., Chen, S., Li, L., Li, L. X., Tang, A., & Wang, T. (2017). A method toward dynamic e-learning services modeling and the cooperative learning mechanism. *Information Technology and Management*, *18*(2), 119-130. DOI: 10.1007/s10799-015-0235-3

The advanced information technologies have made it possible for individuals to carry out cooperative learning efficiently and effectively from anywhere and at any time. To capitalize on the individual need and address the issues associated with the late entry into the e-learning area, it has great significance to study the service mechanism of CSCL on e-learning service and e-learning service computing modeling. This paper proposes an e-learning service model supporting for the life-cycle process management. The proposed model is developed by considering the learner's behaviours during e-learning services, the scheduling policies, and the monitoring mechanism of learning activities. Business process modeling for e-learning services can be taken according to the study ordering of the knowledge points by using workflow modeling technology and process enactment mechanism. The overall life-cycle process management of knowledge is addressed by combining knowledge product modeling, knowledge resource modeling, and credit policies for member selection in research team by considering trust value of learners, advisers and providers in e-learning services. The proposed method can be used for supporting the sustainable development of e-learning services from planning and design, organizing e-learning process, maintenance of the e-learning process, to process improvement, as well as to support learners and advisers to effectively complete innovative team study and complex computation study. Lastly, an extended topic map tool has been developed by adding a knowledge requirement level and an information extraction tool to validate the proposed methodology. These tools can used to guide learners to concentrate on the required knowledge topics and drive knowledge providers to redevelop outdated knowledge hierarchy.

Thakral, P. (2017). Cooperative learning: An innovative strategy to classroom instruction. *Learning Community: An International Journal of Educational and Social Development*, *8*(1), 17-22.

Innovation and reform are the two key factors in the development and progress of any education system and its practices and processes. New strategies of teaching and learning are being thought and practiced as most important inputs to bring about qualitative improvement in the education. Cooperative learning is one such approach which makes the students to learn as group to maximize their own and each other's' learning. The focus of this strategy is on inter- personal exchange of opinions, intellectual challenge, critical thinking, higher level reasoning-the skills which are highly valued in the age of globalization. It is being increasingly felt that thinking process of students is being suppressed by competitive learning environment prevalent in schools. The cut throat competition encourages negative interdependence. The school curriculum has to aim at not only enabling learners to acquire knowledge. The development of intrinsic values and emotional intelligence of learners are equally important. The cooperative learning helps in all round development of personality if applied systematically.

The paper focuses on the benefits of cooperative learning, provides insights into various cooperative learning strategies, their use in classroom situations and highlights a number of essential elements that must be met for deriving success from cooperative learning strategy.

Wallhead, T., & Dyson, B. (2017). A didactic analysis of content development during cooperative learning in primary physical education. *European Physical Education Review*, *23*(3), 311-326.

The purpose of this study was to use the Joint Action Studies in Didactics (JASD) to understand how teachers' and students' interactions co-construct knowledge during Cooperative Learning (CL). The basis of CL is that students learn with and from each other through a structured interdependent relationship. A case study approach was used to examine how a group of three year-5 students and their teacher from an ethnically diverse primary school in New Zealand co-constructed knowledge within a 3-month CL intervention in physical education. The JASD protocol included collecting data on the teacher's intention, practical epistemology and student interactions as they engaged in CL task structures. Data analysis included a search for patterns in the evolution of the didactic contract of content learned as students interacted in the co-construction of knowledge. Findings revealed that the CL tasks provided a pedagogical structure where student interactions were generally aligned with the didactic intent of the tasks. The teaching techniques of the student coach served to make the development of content more dynamic, with an increased frequency of breaches in the didactic contract. This dynamic may facilitate student learning during productive group problem-solving tasks. When the intended content was more specifically defined, the topogenetic technique of teacher intervention within tasks was critical to re-align students' interpretation of the knowledge at stake in the CL tasks.

Walter, D. (2017). *Group work that works*. Retrieved from http://www.quietrev.com/group-work-that-works.

This article begins by stating that group activities are taking up an increasing amount of school time in the US, in part due to Common Core curricula. The author believes that too much time spent on group activities can be burdensome for introverts. He proposes a compromise which realizes the benefits of group work while at the same time allowing introverts to feel comfortable. Two aspects of this compromise are that group activities include substantial time for online interaction and that time to work alone be combined with time for peer interaction.

Zengin, Y., & Tatar, E. (2017). Integrating dynamic mathematics software into cooperative learning environments in mathematics. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, *20*(2), 74-88.

The aim of this study was to evaluate the implementation of the cooperative learning model supported with dynamic mathematics software (DMS), that is a reflection of constructivist learning theory in the classroom environment, in the teaching of mathematics. For this purpose, a workshop was conducted with the volunteer teachers on the implementation of the cooperative learning model supported with DMS. Dynamic materials and worksheets suitable for quadratic functions and sequences topics were developed. The effect of implementing the cooperative learning model supported with DMS in the teaching of the quadratic functions and sequences topics on student performance as well as students' views about the model were examined. The study was carried out using an embedded design. The study group consisted of 61 high school students. A quadratic functions knowledge test, a sequences knowledge test, and an open-ended questionnaire were used as data collection tools. The Mann–Whitney test and dependent t-test were used for the analysis of quantitative data, while content and descriptive analyses were used for the analysis of qualitative data. As a result of analysis of the data, it was found that the model had a positive effect on student achievement. Moreover, the following students' views were identified: the model enabled better understanding, it visualized and concretized the course, and it created a pleasant and enjoyable learning environment.

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